

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action notes that claims 1-21 are pending in the application. By this amendment, claims 9, 20, and 21 have been amended. The amendments to the claims are fully supported by the Specification and do not add any new matter to the application. Therefore, claims 1-21 are still pending in the application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner: (1) objected to the drawings; (2) rejected claims 9-20 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph; (3) rejected claims 1 and 4-6 under 35 USC §102(b); and (4) objected to claims 2-3 and 7-8 as being dependent on a rejected base claim. Applicant responds to the Examiner's objections and rejections below.

Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4). Applicant respectfully submits that this objection has been overcome by the amendments to the Specification above. Specifically, reference character 116 now consistently refers to the "adapter" and 106 now consistently refers to the "first end."

The Examiner also objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5). Applicant respectfully submits that this objection has been overcome by the amendments to the Specification above. Specifically, reference number 112 has been deleted from the Specification.

The Examiner also objected to the drawings because Figure 1 had two 100s. Applicant respectfully submits that this objection has been overcome by the attached Replacement Drawing Sheets. Specifically, one of the 100s in Figure 1 has been deleted.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §112, second paragraph

The Examiner rejected claims 9-19 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, because the term “the first crosswise opening” lacked proper antecedent basis. Applicant submits that the amendment to claim 9 above overcomes this rejection.

The Examiner also rejected claims 20 and 21 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, because she believed that the terms “through utilization of the device” in claim 20 and “the device of claim 19” in claim 21 were unclear. Applicant submits that the amendments to claims 20 and 21 above overcome these rejections.

The Examiner also rejected claim 20 because claim 20 recites a vacuum and she believes that the claim fails to claim any structure that allow for operation of such. Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner’s rejection because there is no requirement that a claim be enabling. Claim 20 claim features of a vacuum and therefore does not have to claim other structure not related to the claimed invention.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 4-6 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,331,714 (Essex). Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 4-6 are not anticipated by Essex.

As to claim 1, Essex does not disclose “first and second arms that are attached to the hose” as recited in claim 1. Even if it were assumed, as the Examiner alleges, that the unnumbered element between clip 41 and ref. 38 were an arm attached to the hose, Essex does not disclose a second arm attached to the hose. The other arm identified by the Examiner (clip 41) is not attached to the hose. Neither end of the clip 41 is attached to the hose (otherwise it

would not work as a clip) and the middle portion of the clip 41 is attached to the unnumbered member between ref. 41 and ref. 38. No portion of the clip 41 is attached to the hose.

In addition, Essex does not disclose a first and second arm "wherein the first arm extends...toward the second arm and the second arm extends...toward the first arm" as recited in claim 1. Even if it were assumed, as alleged by the Examiner, that the clip 41 and the unnumbered element between the clip 41 and ref. 38 were two arms attached to the hose, these "arms" do not extend toward each other. In Essex, clip 41 extends generally perpendicular to and across the unnumbered element between clip 41 and ref. 38 and does not extend "toward" it.

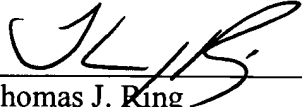
Therefore, for the above reasons, Applicant submits that claim 1 is not anticipated by Essex.

Claims 4-6 are dependent on claim 1. Therefore, for the reasons stated above, claims 4-6 are also not anticipated by Essex.

Conclusion

In view of the aforesaid, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-21 are in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance for these claims is respectfully requested.

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